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## CIA's Brothel

# Unknowning Patrons Were Given LSD

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Special to The Bee

SAN FRANCISCO — A Central Intelligence Agency brothel set up here in the 1950s was actually a front for early experiments with LSD and other drugs.

The CIA rented a one-bedroom apartment on Telegraph Hill in the spring of 1955, equipped it fully with microphones, opened it as a brothel and then fed LSD and other drugs to the unsuspecting patrons of the prostitutes, The Bee has learned.

Agents from the CIA and the U.S. Bureau of Narcotics were stationed in front of the apartment house at 225C Chestnut St. to photograph the uninformed human guinea pigs as they entered and left the brothel, a source close to the project said.

Other agents stationed in a store-room in the building monitored tape-recorded and transmitted the conversations and sounds picked up by the four microphones that were hidden in the rented apartment, the source said.

The source did not know whether the \$100-a-trick prostitutes, who were recruited by a narcotics agent posing as a hoodlum, were aware of the drug experiments or whether they too were being drugged and observed.

But a former CIA psychologist, John Gittiner, told a joint U.S. Senate committee hearing in Washington at least some of the hookers were aware of the experiment and were used to slip the drugs into drinks of their unsuspecting customers. Gittiner, who testified he had been to the San Francisco whorehouse while it was in operation, said he did not know if any of the hookers knew they were working for the CIA.

CIA documents revealed at the hearing by Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said a CIA operative named Morgan Hall organized the mind

The Bee has learned, however, that Morgan Hall was a fictitious name adopted by Col. George White, then the director of the San Francisco field office of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. White, an Office of Strategic Services agent in World War II, was blocked from becoming a CIA agent after the war by J. Edgar Hoover, who considered White a publicity hound. White retired from the narcotics bureau in 1965 and became the fire marshal of Stinson Beach. He died Oct. 24, 1975.

Using the name Morgan Hall, White rented a top floor apartment in the Telegraph Hill building. He signed checks drawn on a Morgan Hall bank account at the Bank of America, The Bee learned.

White then recruited an East Coast narcotics agent, Ira C. Feldman, to come to San Francisco to pose as a hoodlum and gather a string of girls for the bordello.

While Feldman was seeing to that end of the operation, White arranged for sound technicians to install four microphones in the apartment, disguising them as electrical outlets near the bases of the walls, a source connected with the installation of the bugging devices told The Bee.

Two microphones — model DD4s — were installed in the L-shaped living room, which has a glass wall with a spectacular view of San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge. Another was installed in a hallway leading to the bedroom, which was decorated with red curtains, red metallic panels, three framed Toulouse Lautrec posters with black silk mats and a French can-can dancer's picture.

Wires from the microphones were run through the walls to a store-room in the building, which was equipped with two F-301 tape recorders, the source said.

An antenna was also installed on the roof so the sounds from the apartment could be transmitted live to the agents sitting in front of the house and taking pictures of the persons entering and leaving, the source said. That element of the operation was apparently for the amusement of the stake out agents and the transmission was on a frequency anyone in the area might have monitored, the source said.

A large radio in the living room of the bordello was equipped for the installation of television cameras, but The Bee's source said he does not know whether the cameras were installed.

The brothel, which operated at the Chestnut Street address at least until February 1956, attracted a variety of hoodlums, politicians, millionaires and working men to the CIA experiment, the source said.